

JAMES SHAVER
WOODSWORTH
UNTYPICAL CANADIAN



An Estimate of His Life & Ideas
By Frank H. Underhill

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An Address delivered at the Dinner
to inaugurate the
Ontario Woodsworth Memorial Foundation
King Edward Hotel, Toronto
Saturday, October 7th, 1944
by

FRANK H. UNDERHILL

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JAMES SHAVER WOODSWORTH: UNTYPICAL CANADIAN

I am proud and grateful that the task was assigned to me in this evening's proceedings of speaking about Mr. Woodsworth's life. I am proud to have been a friend of his for some twenty years. To enjoy his friendship was a moral education in itself. He was the most completely honest man that I have ever known; and the most completely selfless man, free from merely personal ambition, never indulging in selfish intrigues or struggles for personal power. It is a great source of strength to the C.C.F. that its first leader was J. S. Woodsworth, and in the movement which he founded it is our duty to keep alive the values which he held dear and to which he devoted his life.

So I am going to preach a little sermon about his life and work. If there is a text it will consist of a quotation from John Bunyan which I shall give at the end. Mr. Woodsworth himself, in a pamphlet which he published in 1926, spoke of his life as a modern pilgrim's progress, and I can think of no description that is more fitting. Hence the Bunyan text. The general theme of my discourse will be that he came from an environment which was most typically Canadian but that he developed qualities of character which are for the most part un-Canadian or which at least are found far too rarely in our Canadian community.

First of all, as to the environment. James Shaver Woodsworth was born in 1874 near Toronto, the son of parents who both came of loyalist stock. His forbears were men and women who moved up to British soil in Upper Canada from

New York and Pennsylvania after the American Revolution. His paternal grandfather, Richard Woodsworth, who was a local Methodist preacher in Toronto, served on the loyalist side in the Rebellion of 1837. All those who ever visited the Woodsworth home in Winnipeg will have seen hanging on the study wall the sword which was carried by grandfather Woodsworth when he turned out to help preserve the British connection against the grandfather of the Right Honorable William Lyon Mackenzie King. The Woodsworths were Methodist; Richard Woodsworth, as I have said, a local preacher here in the Toronto district; his son, James Woodsworth, the father of our James Shaver Woodsworth, a pioneer missionary in the North-West who rose to be the Superintendent of Methodist missions there and played a great part in the building up of our Canadian prairies.

This double inheritance of pioneer loyalism and pioneer Methodism needs to be emphasized. For there is nothing that is more distinctively and essentially Canadian than that combination. We are accustomed to think of the loyalists in Upper Canada as having been mainly Anglican. But the Anglican part of loyalism has left to us mainly a tradition of stuffiness and snobbery. It was the Methodists (with some considerable help from the Scotch Presbyterians) who formed the creative element in early Upper Canada, and who did most to make us what we are today in Ontario.

I remember a few years ago sitting one evening in the chapel of Victoria College when Ned Pratt was giving a recital of his poem *Brébeuf and His Brethren*. The audience consisted of the cream of the graduates of that great Methodist college. Everywhere one could see faces of men who were

prominent in the professional and business life of Toronto. The chairman was the titled head of one of the most famous Methodist families of Ontario. And as I listened to those austere beautiful lines about the struggle of Brébeuf and his companions to convert the Indians to Christianity, and my eye wandered over the members of the audience (with here and there the careworn face and threadbare garments of some university professor sticking out incongruously in that comfortable gathering), I could not help reflecting that, after all, it was neither the Jesuits nor the Iroquois who eventually won Ontario, and who set the imprint of their character upon the life of this province; it was the Methodists.

The Woodsworth family moved to the West in 1882 and young Woodsworth grew up in that great new prairie community whose settlement and expansion were main factors in the making of our twentieth-century Dominion of Canada. He received the best education that was available to the young Canadian of his day. He went through Wesley College in Winnipeg, then came down to Victoria College in Toronto to study theology, and completed his academic training by a year at Oxford. When he graduated at Wesley in 1896 he was elected Senior Stick by his fellow students. No one who is familiar with Canadian college life needs to be told that the Senior Stick is the man who is considered by his fellows to be outstanding for his ability and energy, but who is also known by them to fit most perfectly into his environment, who accepts most implicitly the values of his generation, who can be trusted never to think dangerous thoughts. It is interesting to speculate what some of James Woodsworth's respectable, right-thinking classmates of the class

of 1896 must have thought of their Senior Stick in later years when he turned out to be the leading non-conformist of his country. No doubt he must have already shown those strong individual characteristics of his; and his evangelistic background would have made him critical of the society in which he lived. But most Canadian evangelicals have settled down long before they are middle-aged to a very comfortable acceptance of their environment. And this was just what James Woodsworth failed to do.

Perhaps Oxford had a good deal to do with this. He went to England in the fall of 1899. This was the very moment of the outbreak of the Boer War, and he must have become familiar with all the fierce discussion which went on at that time in England (but which was not reproduced in Canada, though we also took part in the Boer War) about the moral values of imperialism. It was in the next year, 1900, that the Labor Party was founded, and he must have heard a good deal of talk on this subject too. Oxford must have accentuated whatever tendencies he already had to emphasize the social gospel of Christianity as distinct from its theological dogmas. It was full at that time of the new humanitarian and social-reform ideas which were bringing about far-reaching changes in English politics. Woodsworth did what many another young Oxonian was doing and spent part of his time living in a settlement in the east end of London.

Whether it was Oxford that did it or not, at any rate he came back to Canada with his mind full of a social philosophy which was hardly yet familiar to most of his fellow Canadians, who were still dominated by the nineteenth century individualistic ideas of a pioneer community. He

was the first of those radicals whom Oxford has sent back to us, the forerunner of the Frank Scotts and Dave Lewises and Ted Jolliffes of our own day.

Back in Canada he entered upon the career for which he had been preparing, that of a minister in the Methodist Church. He became assistant minister in Grace Church, Winnipeg. The city of Winnipeg at the opening of the twentieth century was the most dynamic spot in Canada. It was the reception centre through which poured the thousands of new immigrants to be distributed across the whole of western Canada, and it was the collecting centre from which were shipped the millions of bushels of wheat that formed the basis of the new Canadian economy. And it was in dealing with problems of this new civilization that J. S. Woodsworth was to show those distinctive qualities that made him so unusual a Canadian.

What were these qualities which we think of most readily when we look back over Mr. Woodsworth's life? We may note four of them which made him different from most of his fellow Canadians who had come from much the same environment.

First and most important of all was moral courage. We may as well admit that this is not a quality which is very common in Canada. Physical courage we have in abundance. But the man who is willing to stand by himself when he disagrees with his society, who insists, whatever the cost, on proclaiming the truth as he sees it, is somewhat rare in our history. This kind of courage is one of the things that makes English history so inspiring. But Canadians, both English Canadians and French Canadians, are far too devoted

to group solidarity and far too fond of the material success which comes from unquestioning acceptance of the prevailing standards of their group. J. S. Woodsworth showed from the beginning to the end of his career a willingness to make sacrifices for his principles. He never failed when this test was applied to him. That nation is most fortunate which produces the highest proportion of sturdy individualists of this kind. Liberty is safe only in a society in which such individuals are fairly common. This is the secret of English history. And we shall no doubt have frequent occasion to thank heaven that the founder of our Canadian socialist party was the most stubborn individualist of his generation.

A second outstanding quality was his sympathy with the underdog, with the downtrodden and disinherited. Such sympathy is part of the tradition of Christianity and of the tradition of democracy, and its existence should not require comment. Yet again, this is a quality which has been displayed much more in English than in Canadian history. We do not exactly pass by on the other side in Canada when we see a man who has fallen among thieves. But we have schooled ourselves to believe that in this land of opportunity there are no people needing help. James Woodsworth's life was one long process of identifying himself with the unfortunate and the exploited.

To both of these qualities of moral courage and social sympathy we do, however, pay lip service. Mr. Woodsworth displayed a third quality in which we hardly even profess to believe. That was a passion for clarity. In Canada, in spite of the clearness of our physical atmosphere, we

prefer to live in a mental atmosphere of haze and mist. We never make issues clear to ourselves. Our national instinct is against defining differences so that they can be clearly understood or reconciled. We prefer to leave issues undefined, with an assumption that all right-thinking people would agree about them if ever they were defined and that in the meantime all problems can be solved by indulging in emotions of vague Rotarian good-will. We prefer not to face the fact that our national society is divided vertically into sections and horizontally into classes. At its worst this attitude becomes a dangerous hypocrisy. We need a constant supply of Woodsworths to keep plaguing us into the unpleasant duty of facing up clearly to the issues that confront us.

And this leads to a consideration of the fourth Woodsworth quality to which I should like to draw attention. He was an intellectual pioneer in an era in our history when a new understanding of and a new approach to our national problems was becoming necessary. He began his work in Winnipeg in the period of the great wheat boom. Canada was growing and prospering as she never had done before. And all that was needed, so far as most Canadians could see, was to shovel in more immigrants, to grow more wheat, to build new railways and new manufacturing plants, to develop our real estate, to make two subdivisions grow where only one had grown before. But what was really happening to us was that we were becoming an integral part of the great society of the industrial revolution; and this meant that our phenomenal growth of which we were so proud was reproducing in our midst conditions with which older countries had long been un-

happily familiar. J. S. Woodsworth was one of the first to draw attention to our new problems such as that of the cultural assimilation of the European immigrants and that of the growth of urban and rural slums. These are the themes of the two books which he published in these early years—*Strangers Within Our Gates* (1909) and *My Neighbor* (1911). The ideas in them are now familiar enough to everyone and there was nothing original in them, as he would have been the first to declare, at the time. He was simply applying the more mature wisdom of older civilizations to these newly emerging conditions in Canada. What was original was that a native Canadian should be doing so. And the ideas which he propounded then were those at which he was to keep driving all his life. He would not have called himself a socialist in those days, I suppose; but it is significant that he was already saying that our inherited individual enterprise was not enough to deal with these new social problems but that they called for the intervention of organized community effort.

His fundamental faith from the start was in study and research, and in public education to spread the results of study and research. He wanted to bring the minds of his fellow Canadians up to date. He wanted to help them to tackle their twentieth-century problems with twentieth-century ideas. "I know a lot of my friends," he once said in a later political speech, "who won't drive a car that is of a model more than two years old. A great many of us have machinery in our heads that is of a model a hundred years old." Long before the C.C.F. was founded, and with equal persistence after it was founded, it was the

same Woodsworth at work, filled with a passion for the spread of social understanding. This kind of intellectual pioneering is perhaps what we need most of all in Canada.

Mr. Woodsworth's career from the time of his return from Oxford falls into two clearly divided periods. The dividing line is the Winnipeg strike of 1919. Before that, as minister of the gospel and as social worker, he was to find himself unable to conform to some of the beliefs and practices of his society, and by the end of the summer of 1919 he was an outcast from all the respectable and right-thinking people among whom he had grown up. After that, from the election of 1921, he was to devote his life to building up a political movement which would give expression to the social and economic ideas in which he believed.

His religious studies had made him a modernist in theology. And very soon in his ministry in Winnipeg he found himself in intellectual difficulties about the doctrines of his church. He had already decided to resign as early as 1902 but was dissuaded. In 1907 he handed in his resignation along with a lengthy and forthright statement of his reasons. He could not accept the interpretation put by his church upon baptism and the Lord's Supper; he did not believe in the doctrine of the atonement; he had difficulties about the religious experience of conversion, and about many other things in the Methodist statement of faith. "Such are the doctrines of Methodism. Without discussing particular doctrines, let me briefly state my position thus: Many of the doctrines, of course, I believe, but there are some that rest upon historical evidence which for me is not conclusive. Some are founded on psy-

chological conceptions and metaphysical theories quite foreign to modern thought, and are for me meaningless. Some deal with matters upon which, it seems to me, it is impossible to dogmatize. Upon some I must suspend judgement. Some I cannot accept in the form in which they are stated. Some I cannot accept at all. Yet I am required to 'sincerely and fully believe the doctrines of Methodism' and to 'endeavor fully and faithfully to preach them'! . . . Some may say that it is necessary only that I believe the essential underlying truths. But who is to determine what are the essential underlying truths? Words have well-recognized meanings. We cannot play fast and loose with them. . . . In this matter of personal experience lies the root of the difficulty. My experience has not been what among Methodists is considered normal. . . . My experience has determined my theology, and my theology my attitude toward the Discipline. And all three, according to our standards, are un-Methodistical."

It is of course possible for honest and intelligent men to differ as to how far historic statements of doctrine are to be taken in the literal or how far in the symbolic sense. At any rate, a committee of the Methodist Conference reported: "Having had a full and frank conversation with Brother James S. Woodsworth re the cause of his resignation, we find that there is nothing in his doctrinal beliefs and adherence to our discipline to warrant his separation from the ministry of the Methodist Church, and therefore recommend that his resignation be not accepted and his character be now passed."

Eleven years later, in June 1918, Mr. Woodsworth again offered his resignation. In the mean-

time the war had come, he had publicly stated his opposition to conscription, and had lost his position in Winnipeg. This time he wrote in his letter of resignation: "As years went by, certain disquieting conclusions gradually took form. I began to see that the organized Church had become a great institution with institutional aims and ambitions. . . . Further, the Church, as many other institutions, was becoming increasingly commercialized. This meant the control of the policies of the Church by men of wealth, and in many cases the temptation for the minister to become a financial agent rather than a moral and spiritual leader. It meant, also, that anything like a radical programme of social reform became in practice almost impossible. . . . In the meantime another factor makes my position increasingly difficult. The war has now gone on for four years. . . . According to my understanding of economics and sociology, the war is the inevitable outcome of the existing social organization, with its undemocratic forms of government and competitive system of industry. . . . This brings me to the Christian point of view. For me, the teachings and spirit of Jesus are absolutely irreconcilable with the advocacy of war. Christianity may be an impossible idealism, but so long as I hold it, ever so unworthily, I must refuse, as far as may be, to participate in war. . . . The vast majority of the ministers and other church leaders seem to see things in an altogether different way. The churches have been turned into very effective recruiting agencies. . . . There is little dependence on spiritual forces. The so-called Prussian morality that might makes right and that the end justifies the means is preached in its application

if not in theory. . . . Apparently the church feels that I do not belong and reluctantly I have been forced to the same conclusion."

This time the resignation was accepted promptly. Perhaps the Methodist church, in this contrast between its remarkable flexibility in dealing with the theological heretic and its very stern orthodoxy towards the political heretic during the hysteria of war, does not show up too well. But these transactions are not recalled here for the purpose of criticising the church. It will be more fruitful for us to remind ourselves that it is possible for radical political parties as well as for evangelical churches to become over-institutionalized, to accept too whole-heartedly the values of the society in which they live, to become too intent on success according to the standards of that society. May the C.C.F. continue to produce its Woodsworths in the future as the Methodist church has done in the past!

While Mr. Woodsworth's resignation from the church was not accepted in 1907, he decided to abandon the regular work of a church pastor; and in that year he became head of All People's Mission, a settlement of the Methodist church in the north end of Winnipeg. Here he spent six busy years in social work. In 1913 a group of friends found the money to set up the Canadian Welfare League and to put him in charge. And in 1916 the governments of the three prairie provinces joined to establish the Bureau of Social Research with J. S. Woodsworth as director. During these years he became, as Olive Ziegler puts it very truly in her biography, a "consulting sociologist" not merely for Winnipeg and its neighborhood but for the whole of Canada. His successive of-

fices became centres to which men of all classes resorted for advice and information. It was in these years that he published the two books already mentioned for the use of study groups in the church. He was also constantly on the move, investigating conditions all over the West and writing memoranda and reports upon them. He became a national figure as a lecturer, and was heard with approval in all parts of Canada. And in addition to his many other activities it is noteworthy that he was chosen as the representative of the Winnipeg Ministerial Association upon the Trades and Labor Council of the city. In these activities he found a field of work in which theological difficulties did not intrude; and everywhere he went his message was the same—the need to study and understand the emerging social problems of the new era in Canada. He made himself the interpreter of the working classes to the more comfortable and successful groups of our Canadian community.

All this work was brought to a sudden end in the winter of 1916-17 when he felt it his duty to publish his objections to conscription. His governmental employers at once closed down the Bureau of Social Research. He found himself out of a job and was bitterly denounced by many who had been his associates in his social work.

He moved out to the Pacific coast and took up a small mission charge at a place called Gibson's Landing some twenty miles from Vancouver. Here, cut off from all his former activities, he found temporary rest. But shortly he became interested in the local cooperative store, an enterprise which met with the stern disapproval of a gentleman who was a leading member of his

church, and he had to leave. He was now one of the unemployed indeed. He moved into Vancouver and became a casual laborer, a longshoreman. This was the hardest period of all his life, but there is no need to dwell on what he went through. After the severe testing of these two or three years, as all who met him later in life can testify, nothing ever daunted him or embittered him. Here is an extract from an article he wrote at the time. The article is headed: "Come on in—the Water's Fine!"

"My Winnipeg friends who knew me in connection with church work or social service activities would probably hardly recognize a longshoreman in grey flannel shirt, overalls and slicker, who lines up with a gang alongside a ship. . . . Yet it is the same J.S.W. who, though declared to be down and out, is in reality feeling fairly fit and looking forward to the fight. . . . Yes, I hesitated to make the plunge. Where a man has spent all his time up to middle life along one line it is not easy to make a complete break and, as it were, start life all over again. But circumstances have a curious way of pushing one right up to the brink. Then, unless a man is a downright coward, it is a case of 'Here Goes!' . . . And the water was cold—no doubt about that! Longshoring is hard and monotonous and irregular and, taking it the year round, not much better paid than other unskilled labor. Being a town-bred boy and having gone through school and college into professional life, I had never done manual work. Piling heavy rice sacks or stowing flour or loading salmon or trucking up a steep slippery gangplank is no child's play. . . . But, once in, one has to make the best of it. No one sinks without a struggle, and

in the struggle the blood goes coursing through one's veins till the whole body is atingle. . . . There is a certain exhilaration in having broken through artificial distinctions — in meeting men as men irrespective of nationality or creed or opinions — in being one of them. . . . Perhaps it is in part because 'he that is down need fear no fall' — that the workers 'have nothing to lose but their chains' — but there is a certain sturdiness and fearlessness about the workers that is not commonly found among the so-called higher classes. . . . At present the odds seem against us. But though muscles often ache and the back is tired and much is uncongenial, there is more than compensation in being as yet no man's slave. And what if, after all, as we believe, we are right! So, after the first shock, I have got my breath and shout back my message of good cheer: 'Come on in—the water's fine!'

This was his apprenticeship for his later work as a labor leader in parliament. He became a member of the longshoremen's union. He helped to organize the Federated Labor Party of British Columbia, wrote for the labor paper, became a regular speaker at labor meetings. In the summer of 1919 he was sent on a speaking tour of western Canada in the interests of the labor movement, and at Winnipeg he found himself in the middle of the famous Winnipeg strike.

The strike had begun as a dispute about collective bargaining in a few machine shops. By the time Mr. Woodsworth arrived this dispute had spread into a general sympathetic strike of the Winnipeg labor forces and had been going on for some weeks. It had become a trial of strength between the workers and the owning classes of

Winnipeg. The latter persistently charged that the workers had ulterior motives, that they were aiming at a social revolution and the setting up of a Soviet government. But for a long time there were no outbreaks of violence. The provincial government failed to take any effective action. The so-called Citizens Committee, formed to put down the "revolution," devoted itself to a campaign of hysteria; and eventually trouble did break out between special police and processions of workers and their sympathizers. The Dominion government intervened to force a crisis, or at least that was how its action looked to the workers. (The chief representative of federal authority was the Hon. Arthur Meighen, Minister of the Interior. In 1942 it was to be the cause of special pleasure to many C.C.F.ers whose memories went back to the days of the Winnipeg strike that the C.C.F. served as the instrument in the famous South York by-election for retiring Mr. Meighen to private life.) Leaders of the workers were arrested and charged with seditious conspiracy. Against most of them the charges were successfully maintained after long trials in Winnipeg; and the strike was broken. It remains a landmark in our Canadian social and political history. For the first time we had clearly aligned against each other the two major classes into which modern industrialism has divided our society; and the manner in which the privileged class reacted to the events of that June in Winnipeg left no doubt as to which of the two groups was the more class-conscious or the more determined to fight by fair means or foul for its position.

Mr. Woodsworth immediately on his arrival in Winnipeg became active in addressing the mass



meetings which the strikers were holding. It is worth recalling that the first of these meetings at which he spoke had as its opening speaker the well beloved padre of the First Division, Canon Scott of Quebec. Mr. Woodsworth also helped in the publication of the workers' strike bulletin which they got out every day to present their side of the case. His set of the *Western Labor News* he later presented to the Library of the University of Toronto. As one reads it today one is struck by the mildness and coolness of its language and the reasonableness of its demands. Can we really believe that leaders who used such language were aiming at wrecking the comfortable homes of Winnipeg and bolshevizing the whole country? But the editor, F. J. Dixon, was arrested along with the other strike leaders; and after Mr. Woodsworth had filled in for him for a week, he was arrested too. The charges against Dixon

failed, and in due course the authorities quietly dropped their case against Woodsworth.

If you want to appreciate the atmosphere of panic in which the authorities in Winnipeg were working, it is worth while to read the items in the indictment by the Crown against J. S. Woodsworth. There were six counts, three of which consisted of articles appearing in the labor bulletin from the pen of Mr. Dixon. The three crimes of composition for which Mr. Woodsworth himself had been responsible were: (1) An article entitled "Is There a Way Out?", written shortly after his arrival in Winnipeg, pleading for an understanding of the underlying issues by both sides, suggesting a Royal Commission to investigate the whole situation, and ending "Let us re-iterate that there are very reasonable men in both camps." (2) Two quotations from Isaiah (10:1-2 and 65:21-22). (3) An article entitled "The British Way," with long quotations from a manifesto of the British Labor party demanding a new social order. Well, it is no longer seditious to write about a new social order in Canada.

The Winnipeg strike will long remain a subject of dispute in our modern Canadian history. It was the first definite trial of strength between opposed social forces in our new industrial civilization. It showed how strongly entrenched are the established ruling groups in our society; how bitterly and unscrupulously they will fight for their privileged position; how prone is the government, which supposedly represents all the people, to take the side of the powerful; and how difficult it is for the other side to get its case before public opinion at all. As for Mr. Woodsworth, it left him a complete outcast from the

respectable part of society. But, as things were to turn out, his identifying of himself with the labor cause was to give him a seat in parliament for the next twenty years and to make him the natural spokesman of all Canadians who were seeking a more democratic social order after the war which had been fought to make the world safe for democracy.

In the federal election of 1921 J. S. Woodsworth was elected as member for Winnipeg North Centre, and he continued to hold this seat until his death. This later part of his career is more familiar to all of us, and there is no need to trace its events in any chronological order. There are several points, however, which are worth emphasizing.

The new phenomenon of the 1921 parliament was the contingent of some 65 "Progressive" members. In this and the succeeding parliaments of the 1920's and 1930's Mr. Woodsworth regularly had one or two labor colleagues from the west, and they formed a little labor party of their own. (On one occasion Bill Irvine explained about the labor party: "The member for Winnipeg North Centre is the leader of the party and I am the party.") They co-operated throughout these years with this larger and looser body of Progressives. But the Progressives were never quite able to make up their minds whether they were a new political party, or whether they were an independent left wing of the Liberal party, or just what they were politically. And after the first upheaval of post-war unrest was over, they gradually disintegrated. Mr. King carried on a patient courtship which, like most of his statesmanship, was somewhat slow in producing results but very

effective in the long run. Most of the Progressives, because they didn't quite know where they stood, because they were well-meaning but unmeaning, disappeared into the Liberal party or were left at home in later elections by their electorates. Some of them, especially in Manitoba, became known as Liberal-Progressives. And now we have "Progressive Conservatives" and "Labor Progressives" as well. That fine word "Progressive," which seemed to hold such promise in 1921, must be said in our day to have acquired a certain smell.

In 1924 a few of the Progressives, who were determined to remain independent and not to succumb to the embraces of parties run from St. James St. or King St., broke away from the main Progressive body and formed an independent group which the newspapermen nicknamed the Ginger Group. Most of them were U.F.A. members from Alberta who insisted on their function as spokesmen of a distinct occupational group, the farmers, and who, like the labor members, were denounced by right-thinking people for introducing class distinctions into politics. Mr. Woodsworth worked with them, and so did Agnes Macphail from Ontario. They were the nucleus from which sprang the C.C.F. in 1932. Ten years' experience in parliament had shown them that it was perfectly possible for farmer and labor representatives to agree on every main issue that came up, and had confirmed the beliefs with which they entered public life that what was needed in Canada was not mere tinkering with tariffs or railway rates but a far-reaching change in the whole economic and social system. By 1932 they were ready to commit themselves to the launching of a

party which was definitely socialist in its program. Their socialism came not from any abstract philosophising of their own nor from imported ready-made European philosophies, but from their practical experience in dealing with national Canadian problems in the post-war years. And the Regina manifesto, in the language and in the substance of its program, was an expression of this fact.

The 1920's and 1930's, so far as Mr. Woodsworth's parliamentary work was concerned, must often have seemed to be years of rather fruitless agitation. Only this small minority of independent members survived to sit and vote with him. The resolutions which he presented in the House were always voted down by big majorities and usually were discussed very inadequately by those majorities. But we can see now that it was he who first advocated most of the social policies which with general consent we are just beginning to adopt today. And he did in the earlier years achieve one concrete result. In 1927 Old Age Pensions were adopted because of his pressure upon the leaders of the two old parties.

The first resolution which he drafted after his election in 1921 was one for unemployment insurance, which he was told by the Clerk of the House he could not move because only members of the government can make motions involving the expenditure of money by His Majesty's government. Steadily he kept pressing the question of the B.N.A. Act and of the obstacles which it presents to any advanced social-reform policy. And just as steadily the Liberal government kept making the B.N.A. Act an excuse for doing nothing. It was only at last in 1935 that Mr. Woodsworth

succeeded in getting a special committee appointed to examine our constitutional difficulties, and the report of that committee is one step in the sequence of events that led to the Rowell-Sirois Commission. On foreign policy and international relations also it was likely to be Mr. Woodsworth, in any given session, who raised questions and forced some discussion in a very apathetic Commons. It was he who became the chosen spokesman for working-class groups when they had some grievance which they wished to get before parliament and the public. It was he who more than any other private member, after the depression came, kept calling the attention of the government to the plight of the poor and the unemployed. And, in addition, he spent all the months between parliamentary sessions in missionary tours across the country speaking to all kinds of audiences in all kinds of assembly halls.

This work won for J. S. Woodsworth an acknowledged position as the chief private member of parliament. His influence in the House and in the lobbies was far greater than any recorded votes would indicate. More important, when the C.C.F. was founded in 1932, he was its inevitable leader. He was known all across the country. He and his former colleagues had learnt the technique of organized team-work in parliament and had found that they agreed on all major issues. He was chosen leader of the new movement because of his acknowledged mastery of those issues. In parliament and in the country at large he had built up a following who had come to accept his analysis of the problems facing Canada and who trusted without reserve his essential honesty of purpose.

The C.C.F. grew slowly but surely. In the years when it seemed hardly to grow at all Mr. Woodsworth worked tirelessly at his missionary task of bringing social and economic realities before the Canadian people. He did not go in for emotional rabble-rousing, he did not indulge in personal invective or in party manoeuvring. Under his leadership his party won the reputation of sticking to the issues that were really important. And today, now that he has gone, no one needs to be told what that has meant in the growth of popular support for the C.C.F.

In September, 1939, came the second world war. Mr. Woodsworth refused to compromise with his life-long convictions, though he knew that he could not carry his party with him. He stood up in parliament by himself and opposed our participation in the war. Never was his hold on the respect of parliament, of opponents as well as of followers, so clearly shown as in the hearing which was given to this last great speech of his.

Then, shortly after, came the breakdown in his health, his enforced retirement from public activities, and finally, on the 21st of March, 1942, his death. "After this it was noised abroad that Mr. Valiant-for-truth was taken with a Summons. . . . When he understood it, he called for his Friends, and told them of it. Then said he, I am going to my Father's, and tho with great Difficulty I am got hither, yet now I do not repent me of all the Trouble I have been at to arrive where I am. My Sword, I give to him that shall succeed me in my Pilgrimage, and my Courage and Skill, to him that can get it. . . . So he passed over, and all the Trumpets sounded for him on the other side."

We are trying now to raise an Ontario memorial

to him. Let us remember that the best way to perpetuate his memory is to cultivate those qualities for which he was distinguished—his moral courage, his wide social sympathies, his passion for truth, his intellectual pioneering. The C.C.F. will remain his greatest work, and a special responsibility rests upon its leaders and its members to hold firm to the values which he cherished. Politics by itself is apt to become an accursed profession—as it was once called by one of its most eminent English practitioners—for it involves so much competitive striving for personal and party success; and politicians are under a constant temptation to become so concentrated upon victory over the enemy—or even, alas, at times over their own friends—that the purpose of victory is forgotten. The C.C.F. is still what Mr. Woodsworth left it, a movement devoted to social and economic change in the interests of the great mass of the plain common people. Let us resolve to keep it a movement and to save it from sinking into being merely a party intent on collecting votes. And one of the best ways to do that is to foster through this Woodsworth Foundation a vigorous program of imaginative social study and research, so that Woodsworth House may become a source of the same kind of inspiration as radiated from J. S. Woodsworth's successive offices of church minister, social worker and member of parliament.

FROM THE WRITINGS OF J. S. WOODSWORTH

Our Alien Immigrants

(From the University Magazine, Feb., 1917)

The coming of the immigrant has intensified and complicated the serious problems that would in any case have to be solved in a young and developing country . . . The transition from the agricultural to the industrial stage has not been easy in any country . . . and becomes very formidable indeed when the country is being settled by newcomers who have not even a common language . . . Undoubtedly the immigrant has thus helped to create our problems — as, it should not be forgotten, he has helped to create our wealth. It is not so clearly realized that the immigrant must help to solve these problems and may indeed take a foremost place in the bringing in of a better day. The immigrants bring better assets than we sometimes realize . . . The members of each nationality bring with them a rich and varied culture . . . Further, the immigrants are imbued with a reverence and a patriotism which we need in this new and commercialized country of ours . . . The problem after all is possibly not so much the problem of the immigrant as the problem of the Canadian. We have in practice taken for granted that our standards were the only and final standards . . . More than missionaries we need interpreters — those who can mediate between the Canadian and the newcomer . . . "God has many bests," as a wise teacher once put it.

The Business Man's Psychology

(From On the Waterfront, written in 1918 or 1919)

A good deal of nonsense is often solemnly uttered by Socialist speakers and other working class advocates with regard to the "capitalist bunch." They are classified as bourgeois and petty bourgeois. They are often depicted as a set of self-conscious hypocrites. . . . Now, as a matter of fact, most of these descriptions are second-hand, being borrowed from translations of European writers. . . . Our "middle class" occupies a very different position from what is known in Europe as the "middle class."

In the background of the majority of the successful business men of Canada there is an old Eastern homestead. The successful business man may lunch at a high-class club or occupy a box at the theatre or spend his vacations in Europe, but as a boy he "did the chores," swam in the village millpond, cut his name in the desks of the little red school-house, and generally lived the all-round democratic life of a farmer's boy. . . . The labor problem was confined to the hired man and the hired girl. . . . Flitting recollections of such a life pass before the half-shut eyes of the big business manager as he rests in his comfortable leather chair after a heavy day at the office. In the nearer background of his consciousness is the life of the small town in which he experienced his early business struggles. Here he married and set up his first home. Here his children had measles and croup and he knew what it was to be on friendly terms with all sorts of neighbors. In his business he called most of his employees by their first names and knew more or less of their personal affairs. There were few poor in the town, and they were generally shiftless and addicted to

drink. If a man didn't make things go, it was more or less his own fault. Organized labor was unknown and Socialism was unheard of.

Since our successful business man moved to the city and entered upon larger commercial and financial enterprises, the life has been very different. The greatest change lies in his isolation from the common life about him. His offices in the fine new warehouses are open only to employees of the highest rank. He throws the responsibility for details upon managers and foremen. . . . At noon he lunches at an exclusive club with men of his own group and way of thinking. He drives or is driven in his own car, so that he does not even rub shoulders with the strap-hangers in the street cars. His home is in the best residential district. . . . His isolation is complete, his class-consciousness assured.

He is kind-hearted. . . . His early childhood and the village life gave him personal sympathy. But he has had no personal experiences of the desperate struggles of modern industrial life, and no enlightenment with regard to modern methods of social service. He will send a Christmas basket to a poor family at Christmas but he will fight valiantly against organized labor. Again the key to his action lies in his own personal experiences with their limitations. He thinks he knows the problems of labor because he knew his father's hired man. . . . He fails to realize that just as his mahogany-finished office and beautiful residence differ widely from the old barn in which he forked hay or his little bedroom with the rag carpet, so an absolutely new world has grown up about him.

But is he not a leader in the new commercial and industrial life? Undoubtedly; but he has seen life not as a series of human relationships, but

merely from the standpoint of dividends. He thinks himself just. He would not commit a vulgar theft. He would not insult his neighbor's wife. He does not realize that he is the beneficiary of a system that is degrading womanhood and crushing out manhood. Can he be made to understand?

At Bay: On the Shores of the Last West

(From On the Waterfront)

The longshoremen of Vancouver are as varied in type as their previous occupation and place of residence. . . .

That "bunch" of men rolling the oil barrels — one is an ex-minister. Years ago in an ancient university, while engaged in historical studies, he broke away from the orthodox evangelical positions. He threw himself into all sorts of social service activities where, by slow degrees, he learned to trace the causes of social evil. Then came the war. Conventional religion and profiteering patriotism were seen in their true light. He preferred the rough and uncertain road of freedom and followed the great adventure over the mountains to the land's limit.*

His companion is a young Greek. When but a child he fared forth to follow his ideal. . . . The new world beckoned him. South America did not offer what he sought. He came to Canada. By slow stages he has crossed from the Atlantic to the Pacific. He has engaged in every conceivable occupation and learned, alas, that in no country can he live up to his ideals. Passionately devoted to his language, lighted by the wisdom of the ancient philosophers, he dreams of an international republic in which the idealized genius of Greece will find realization.

* Clearly a description of J. S. Woodsworth himself.

Together these two deliver their oil barrel to a big Finn. He has been through the fight for democracy in his own unhappy country. Years ago, when he emigrated to New York, he had given his scanty savings to a Finnish professor to help start a Socialist newspaper. In California he had been induced to join a co-operative colony on Malcolm Island. The scheme had failed. He will not travel further. The shores of the Pacific afford standing ground for one more struggle for democracy.

From the cradle of the race civilization has moved westward. Ever there has been an outlet to the West. But now the circle is complete. . . . Men have fled before the system, but the system has overtaken them — it is crowding them into the sea. As they awaken to the situation they are preparing with quiet determination not to trek but to stand. . . . These men represent the great army of Labor. The war has carried us to the shore of the last West. We stand at bay!

A Prayer

(Written for the Winnipeg Labor Church, 1920)

We meet together as brothers and sisters of the one big family.

We confess that we have not yet learned to live together in love and unity. We have thought too much of our own interests and too little of the common welfare. We have enjoyed and even sought special privileges. Our own gain has often involved another's loss. We are heartily sorry for these, our misdoings; the memory of them is grievous unto us.

We acknowledge that we are still divided into alien groups separated from one another by barriers of language, race and nationality; by barriers of class and creed and custom. May we

overcome prejudice. May we seek to find common ground. May we recognize the beauty in other types than our own. As we claim that our own convictions should be respected, so may we respect the convictions of others. May we grow in moral stature until we can join hands over the separating walls. May we enter into the joy of a common fellowship.

We have learned how imperfect is our knowledge, how narrow our vision. May we be willing to welcome truth from whatever source it comes. May we endeavor to follow the truth at whatever cost.

We should remember that the things that are seen are temporal; that the things that are not seen are eternal. May we judge things by their spiritual value. May we estimate success by high standards and, in our own lives, reject the temptation of a low aim and easy attainment.

We would be wise in our sympathies and generous in our living. If we have more than others, may we accept our heavier responsibilities. We would extend to others that indulgence which we crave for ourselves.

We are grateful for the lives of all the wise and good who have made this world a better place in which to live. May we enter into their spirit and carry forward their work.

We pledge ourselves to united effort in establishing on the earth an era of justice and truth and love.

May our faces be toward the future. May we be children of the brighter and better day which even now is beginning to dawn. May we not impede but rather co-operate with the great spiritual forces which, we believe, are impelling the world onward and upward.

ONTARIO WOODSWORTH MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

What it is and what it proposes to do

ONTARIO WOODSWORTH MEMORIAL FOUNDATION was incorporated in October, 1944, under the laws of the Province of Ontario, as a corporation without share capital, for the purpose of establishing an educational institution to teach and provide courses and research in the social sciences, economics, philosophy and kindred subjects.

The Foundation is empowered to accept gifts and donations for the above purposes, and generally to do all such things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of these purposes. It is to be carried on without the purpose of gain, and any profits or other accretions are to be used in promoting its objects.

The Foundation embodies an idea which was very dear to Mr. Woodsworth's heart, and one of which he spoke many times. He had hoped to see it take shape in his lifetime. It was considered, therefore, that no more fitting form could be found for a memorial to his life and work.

At an inaugural dinner held in Toronto on October 7th, 1944, a campaign was launched to collect \$25,000 for the purchase and equipment of a building in uptown Toronto to form the nucleus of a centre in which could be carried on the activities indicated in the Charter. It was at this dinner that the address printed herewith was delivered.

The initial response to the appeal for funds was most encouraging, but as the first edition of

this booklet goes to press most of the money needed to reach the above objective is still to be raised.

It is hoped that rentals for the use of space in Woodsworth House by organizations fulfilling its purposes will make it self-sustaining. It is also planned to collect a small annual sustaining fee from those who wish to become active members of the project.

It is intended, as circumstances and funds permit, to expand facilities by additions to the property, and ultimately to develop a fully staffed Labor College, where study of the social sciences, co-operative living and democratic leadership will be more completely organized.

Contributions in any amount will be welcomed from those who would like to have a part in establishing this memorial to a great Canadian, the keynote of whose life and ideas is so well expressed in the address printed in this booklet.

A subscription form will be found on the adjoining page.

All the proceeds from the sale of this booklet will go to the Foundation.

ONTARIO WOODSWORTH MEMORIAL FOUNDATION,
45 Castle Frank Crescent, Toronto, Ontario.

I desire to contribute to the establishment of an Ontario Memorial to the late James
Shaver Woodsworth, to the amount of \$_____, payable as follows:_____

Enclosed find Cheque for \$_____
Money Order

NAME (Mr., Mrs., Miss) _____

ADDRESS _____

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Some of J. S. Woodsworth's Writings

Strangers Within Our Gates: Toronto, 1909.

My Neighbor: Toronto, 1911.

On the Waterfront: pamphlet, Ottawa, no date; articles written while he was a longshoreman in Vancouver.

"Following the Glean": a *Modern Pilgrim's Progress—to date!*: pamphlet, Ottawa, 1926; contains the text of his two letters of resignation from the church, 1907 and 1918, and also of the articles on which he was indicted for seditious libel in the Winnipeg Strike, 1919.

Hours That Stand Apart: pamphlet, Ottawa, 1929; extracts from articles written through the years from 1908 to 1927.

Speeches in Parliament: These may be found in Hansard from 1922 to 1940. In 1929 J. L. Cohen made a summary and compilation of Mr. Woodsworth's speeches down to that date and published them in a pamphlet called *Labor's Case in Parliament* (published by the Canadian Brotherhood of Railroad Employees). In 1933 Grace MacInnis edited another pamphlet of selections from his speeches 1930-33, entitled *A Plea for Social Justice*.

An admirable life of J. S. Woodsworth was published in 1934, written by Olive Ziegler and entitled: "*Woodsworth, Social Pioneer*."

